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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PREF](#) [TH](#) [MY](#)  
SUBJECT: DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER NAJIB ON THAILAND

REF: A. KUALA LUMPUR 1976 - SURAYUD VISIT

[1](#)B. KUALA LUMPUR 1764 - NO TEARS FOR THAKSIN

Classified By: Ambassador Christopher LaFleur for reasons 1.4 b, d

[1](#)1. (C) During a November 14 conversation with visiting US PACOM Commander Fallon and the Ambassador, Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister Najib Tun Razak offered his assessment of the situation in Southern Thailand. Najib said that the GOM was reassured by the clear change in policy toward the South under the new Thai government. Ousted PM Thaksin has refused to understand that the southern Thai wanted only two things: 1) to be able to practice their religion and culture without being forced to assimilate into Thai culture; and 2) to participate in Thailand's economic development. Thai Muslims were loyal to the Thai King and were not bent on fighting for, much less dying for, independence. The new regime understood this and the GOM would look for ways to be supportive (although he also noted that Malaysia would continue to host the 133 Thai who fled recently into Malaysia until they felt "comfortable" returning).

[1](#)2. (C) Malaysia itself opposed military interference in politics, Najib said, but he judged a lenient posture toward this coup was warranted because it was a "special case." It had clearly been guided by a "higher power" in Thailand and not by the military's own ambitions. Thaksin had been perceived as undermining the position of the Throne, making his overthrow inevitable given Thai reverence for their sovereign, according to Najib.  
LAFLEUR